

COUNTRY Indochina

DATE DISTR. 3 April 1951

SUBJECT Viet Minh Attacks in the Dong Trieu
Area of Tonkin

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REPORT NO.

1. The main Viet Minh attack at present is directed toward Haiphong. The French are reluctant to commit a large number of troops to meet this attack, however, because they fear it is a feint to cover an ultimate attack in the Hanoi area. The main Viet Minh objective appears to be the control of Route Coloniale 13, with the possibility of action toward the south to draw strong counterforces into the Dong Trieu-Uong Bi axis. It is also possible that the Viet Minh will strike against Luc Nam. The Phu Lang Thuong-Luc Nam road is currently menaced by one regular Viet Minh battalion and three territorial battalions north of Phu Lang Thuong. In addition, elements of the 303 Brigade are shelling the area northwest of Vinh Yen and several Viet Minh battalions are appearing west and southwest of the Red River.
2. Although the present main attack is in the Dong Trieu area, the French Command in Haiphong is on guard against Viet Minh feints to the north of Haiphong and Quang Yen and against attacks from the sea. The French are depending upon forces in the Sept Pagodes area to maintain a position from which they could stage maneuvers aimed at creating the impression of a serious menace to the flanks of the attacking Viet Minh forces.
3. French troops in the Hanoi area are disposed as follows:
 - a) The First Division Marche Tonkin is covering the area north of Hanoi, controlling the axis of Route Coloniale 3 and assuring freedom of movement along Route Coloniale 2.
 - b) The Second Division Marche Tonkin is guarding Route Provinciale 13 between Phu Lang Thuong and Luc Nam.
4. On 26 and 27 March 1951 two Viet Minh regiments attacked Route Coloniale 13 between Uong Bi and Mao Khe, capturing the posts, dam and reservoir four kilometers north of Uong Bi.* French losses in this engagement were high.
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* [REDACTED] Comment. According to available information, the Viet Minh captured Uong Bi on 2 April 1951.

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